

Memorandum

To: NASBE members

From: Public Education Positions Committee

Re: Recommended Changes to NASBE's Public Education Positions

Date: July 26, 2012

The Public Education Committee is reporting all new and amended Public Education Positions recommended by the Committee to the NASBE membership at least 60 days prior to the Annual Business Meeting. Two documents are attached: first, the proposed additions and amendments to NASBE's Public Education Positions, and second, the complete 2012 edition of the Public Education Positions (as approved by NASBE's voting delegates in October 2011).

This year's changes are organized into three items that cover:

- 1) Closing the Achievement Gap (based on recommendations from a NASBE Governmental Affairs subcommittee;
- 2) Summer Learning (based on recommendations from NASBE project work; and
- 3) Recommendations from the 2011 NASBE Study Group on Teacher Effectiveness.

These additions and amendments will be voted on by the Voting Delegates to NASBE's Annual Business Meeting, which will take place in conjunction with the association's Annual Conference at 2:15 pm, October 12, 2012 in Chicago, Illinois.

Questions about the Public Education Positions can be addressed to David Kysilko at NASBE at 800-368-5023, ext. 1111 or davidk@nasbe.org.

Thank you for your attention.

2012 Public Education Positions Committee

Jane Goff (CO), Chair
Brenda Gullett (AR)
Steve Pound (ME)
Terry Whittaker (DE)
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ITEM 1. Recommendations from NASBE’s Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Closing the Achievement Gap

Notes:

This recommended position and amendments originated from a subcommittee of NASBE’s Governmental Affairs Committee (GAC), which was charged with looking at NASBE’s Positions related to Closing the Achievement Gap. The recommended position (along with several amendments). (Throughout this document, changes are in red, with ~~overstrike~~ marking deletions and underlining marking additions.)

Recommended New Position:

2. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

V. Closing the Achievement Gap

NASBE is strongly committed to holding high expectations for all students and eliminating persistent disparities in achievement performance among students of different racial, ethnic, gender, and socioeconomic groups. NASBE believes all children are capable of learning at high individual levels when supported by a receptive and nurturing community, quality instruction, and rigorous curriculum.

Recommended Amendments to Current Positions:

2. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

O. ~~Low-Performing Schools~~ School Improvement

~~Even as state academic standards take hold, and as students, schools, and districts are evaluated by state assessment systems that are tied to the new standards, it is clear that millions of students attend low-performing schools that are not meeting the standards that states and federal policymakers hope for them to achieve. These schools are now being identified by state accountability systems. However, the goal of standards and accountability systems should not be to distribute rewards and sanctions to schools based on achievement. Rather, t~~The central goal of all education policies and programs needs to be school improvement for greater student achievement. In order to reach this goal, states should take the following actions:

1. Allocate funds to districts to ensure that all schools have the resources they need to attract and retain high-quality school leaders, high-quality teachers, and high-quality staff;
2. Develop and adopt effective teacher and school leader induction, support, and evaluation systems;

3. Ensure that all teachers **and school leaders** are provided with quality professional development experiences that are related to state standards and continuous school improvement;
4. Encourage teacher and administrator preparation programs to locate in communities that need school leaders and teachers;
5. Provide fiscal resources, guidelines, and technical assistance to establish effective data systems to inform school improvement at all levels;
6. Develop a comprehensive, statewide plan for improving ~~the persistently lowest performing~~ schools that consistently do not meet standards. The elements of such a state plan should include:
 - a. A strategy for building district capacity to turn around schools;
 - b. Guidance to school districts on turnaround options, their research base, and conditions and environments where they were proven to be successful;
 - c. State approval (~~or at the very least, monitoring~~) of local improvement plans;
 - d. Investments in leadership, particularly at the school level;
 - e. Requirement that all schools develop a school improvement plan;
 - f. A system for tracking, analyzing, and disseminating results of ongoing restructuring efforts;
 - g. A strategy for building the capacity of the state education agency to ensure it is able to carry out the state's plan to help district improve ~~low performing~~ schools that are not meeting standards; and;
 - h. Options for schools that continue to miss **AYP** benchmarks ~~even after restructuring; and~~
 - ~~i. Ongoing support for schools that exit restructuring.~~ (2008; for more information, see NASBE's report: *Meeting the Challenge: The State's Role in Improving Low-Performing Schools through Restructuring*)

5. DIVERSITY

A. Culturally Competent School System

9. Encourage state P-20 systems to develop standards for ensuring culturally competent education. (2002, 2012; for more information, see NASBE's report: *A More Perfect Union: Building an Education System that Embraces All Children*)

5. FUNDING

Each state must provide adequate **and equitable** financial support for public education within its boundaries. NASBE supports the following concepts:

ITEM 2. Recommendation for Position on Summer Learning

Notes:

This recommended position is derived from NASBE's project work (funded by The Wallace Foundation) that resulted in the Discussion Guide, *Summer Learning: A New Vision for Supporting Students in Summer Programs*. One of the key takeaways from the Discussion Guide is the need to move away from traditional (usually remedial) summer school to a new vision for summer learning that offers more attractive learning opportunities for all students, even as it combats summer learning loss.

Recommended New Position:

2. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

W. Summer Learning

1. Effective summer learning programs can combat the effects of learning loss. To ensure summer programs are effective, states and districts should take into account the best available research and use the following promising principles:

- Increase the duration and scope of summer programs so they are of sufficient length, full time, and integrate these programs into any district reform strategy;
- Expand participation beyond academically struggling students, since all students can benefit from summer learning programs;
- Strengthen and expand partnerships in order to improve coordination between programs, agencies and funding streams;
- Encourage attendance and participation through a variety of means, such as providing transportation, comprehensive supports, and attractive programming that blends academic learning with engaging activities;
- Align the curriculum with the school year, providing both remediation from the previous year and an introduction to material for the upcoming year;
- Emphasize professional development for staff in summer learning programs.

2. State boards of education should ensure that districts recognize their authority and are encouraged to include high-quality summer learning as part of their overall academic program. State boards can also develop model standards or guidelines for out-of-school time and/or summer learning programs. (For more information, see NASBE's Discussion Guide, *Summer Learning: A New Vision for Supporting Students in Summer Programs – 2012.*)

ITEM 3. Recommendations from the 2011 NASBE Study Group on Teacher Effectiveness

Notes:

This item is somewhat more complicated, in part because the Study Group had so many important things to say about teaching policy, and in part because NASBE's Positions have covered some of this territory in the past. This meant that the PEP committee had to crosswalk the Study Group's recommendations with the current positions, adding, deleting, amending, and moving statements where appropriate to ensure that the resulting positions are not redundant, contradictory, or confusing.

7. PERSONNEL

State boards of education have a fundamental responsibility to ensure that all school personnel have the skills, knowledge and attributes to do their jobs; continue to improve professionally throughout their careers; and receive appropriate compensation. In order to help boards fulfill this charge, NASBE supports the following statements:

Recommended New Positions

A. Teacher Preparation Leading to Licensure

1. Every teacher of record, no matter his or her pathway to the profession, must have significant and early exposure and clinical experience in the field teaching a diverse set of students.
2. Every teacher of record, no matter his or her pathway to the profession, must pass a rigorous and comprehensive assessment in both content and pedagogy to complete the teacher preparation program.
3. State boards of education, in collaboration with teacher preparation institutions and accrediting agencies, should ensure that candidates are entering the workforce with the skills to teach students to be college and career ready. Specific recommendations include:
 - Preparation programs should focus on core pedagogical competencies that include collaboration with colleagues, reflective learning, and use of formative assessment to drive instruction.
 - Preparation programs should ensure that incoming teachers have the fundamental skills and understanding to use technology to enhance their instructional and collaborative practice.
 - Preparation programs should ensure teacher candidates learn how to collect, interpret, and use data to improve instruction.

- Preparation programs should provide a residency-type experience where the teacher candidate's experience is designed, supported, and monitored by preparation programs in collaboration with districts.
- Preparation programs should ensure teacher candidates have an understanding of the college- and career-ready standards adopted by states.
- Preparation programs should ensure teacher candidates develop the classroom management skills needed to provide students with an effective learning environment.
- Preparation programs should ensure that clinical experience and coursework focus on candidates' cultural awareness and on students' social-emotional development. This should include knowledge and skills in linguistics, cross-cultural communication, and multiple learning styles.
- Preparation programs should include instruction in ethics and professionalism.

4. State boards of education, in coordination with teacher licensing boards where they exist, should ensure alignment among all levels of educator preparation programs, licensure and certification requirements, and evaluation standards. Specific recommendations include:

- States should provide policy incentives and accountability measures to establish a system that includes a continuous feedback loop among the preparation institution, the local education agency, and the graduated teacher candidates.
- State boards of education should ensure there is a system in place to oversee and monitor the quality of teacher preparation programs within the state.

5. Educator preparation courses should cover the latest research on the significant implications of children's health on learning. In addition, educators should be prepared to integrate health into overall lesson plans, such as reading health literature in English classes, manipulating health statistics in math classes, and including kinetic learning with physical activity in lesson plans. (2011)

B. Teacher Induction Programs

1. To maximize resources and address the growing attrition rate, state and district education leaders should ensure that all teachers complete a multi-year induction program. Components of a comprehensive and high-quality induction program include:

- Specific and focused orientation to the district, school, and leadership team;
- A high-quality mentorship system where teachers are paired with effective teachers and they engage in continuous and constructive feedback on a regular basis;

- Established and dedicated time for planning, collaboration, and professional learning opportunities with teachers both in the teacher's school and with other new teachers in the district;
- Multiple formal and informal observations of the teacher during the first two years conducted by school leadership, including principals and other teacher leaders; and
- Partnerships between districts and higher education institutions to ensure strong alignment and consistency between programs in order to meet the needs of each program, district, and candidate.

2. Each state board of education, in collaboration with its chief state school officer, should strongly advocate full funding of induction programs.

C. Teachers' Continuing Education and Professional Growth

1. NASBE supports the concepts of teacher development throughout the teacher's career and providing teachers with working conditions and professional growth opportunities that encourage retention. Specific recommendations include:

- States should provide flexibility and incentives to allow teachers and districts to amend the weekly and yearly school calendars to allow time for professional development and collaboration.
- States and districts should provide flexibility and incentives to allow the use of technology to enhance the ability of teachers to collaborate.
- States should provide incentives and flexibility for districts and teachers to participate in professional learning in the areas of data management, collaboration, blended learning, and the use of technology in the classroom.

2. State boards of education should encourage preparation programs, local education agencies, and state departments of education to establish clearly defined horizontal and vertical teaching and leadership pathways. Specific recommendations include:

- States should establish separate licensure or endorsement criteria for individuals who wish to be mentor or master teachers.
- Districts can develop differentiated pay scales for mentor or master teachers.
- State boards of education can provide recertification credits or professional development credits for individuals who wish to become mentor or master teachers.
- In collaboration with districts, teachers, and licensing entities, state education leaders should work to establish differentiated career pathways within the profession.

D. Teacher Evaluation

1. Evaluation systems should be designed and used for the purpose of improving instructional practice and student learning. State education leaders should provide flexibility and incentives to create a culture of professional growth based on goals and objectives rather than perceived punitive measures to release teachers from their position. Specific recommendations include:

- Compensation and incentive-based programs should be aligned with teacher expectations and duties and not be based solely on student performance.
- Teacher evaluation criteria should be aligned with an established set of teacher standards. These could include InTASC standards, Model Leader standards, or other standards established in the state.
- State education leaders should create an evaluation system designed to assist and assess teacher growth and professional development.

2. The tools and processes of an effective evaluation system should be designed to create a feedback loop between the leadership team and the teachers. To promote feedback loops, state boards of education and district leaders can:

- Provide flexibility and incentives to districts and schools to amend weekly and annual school calendars to imbed collaboration and professional learning opportunities into the day. The professional learning opportunities for individuals are based on the goals established by the teacher and administrative team in teachers' evaluations.
- Provide flexibility and incentives to districts and schools to enhance the use of technology to provide timely and constructive feedback on the teachers' instructional practice.
- Provide professional learning opportunities to teachers and leaders on an individual, school, and programmatic level.

3. Evaluation systems should include multiple measures of evidence of a teacher's effectiveness and instructional practice. Recommended elements of the evaluation system are as follows:

- Measures of student growth;
- Measures of teachers' content knowledge;
- Multiple formal and informal observations;
- Personal and peer assessments and reflection;
- Student evaluations; and
- Teachers' perceptions of working conditions and support

4. Evaluators and those who are being evaluated should participate in substantive, meaningful training and/or certification on the evaluation tools and process.

Recommended Deletions and Amendments to Current Positions:

~~A. Teacher Development, Supply, and Demand~~

- ~~1. Improving the quality and quantity of teachers, which requires states to develop standards-based systems of teacher preparation, evaluation and development while recruiting promising teacher candidates.~~
- ~~2. Providing teachers with working conditions and professional growth opportunities that encourage retention.~~[Note: this concept was moved to “C. Teachers’ Continuing Education and Professional Growth.”]
- ~~3. Nationally, colleges prepare sufficient numbers of teachers, but these teachers often fail to enter the field or leave the field soon after arriving, fail to become certified in high-need subject areas, or avoid jobs in urban and rural districts that need teachers most. Investing in attracting more new teachers to the field is necessary but not sufficient to alleviate teacher shortages. States must also develop policies that improve teacher retention, distribution, and diversity.~~
- ~~4. Developing state licensure and certification programs that require teachers to demonstrate progressively higher-level knowledge and skills to help students achieve high standards.~~
- ~~5. Working in regional and national groups to raise the quality of teaching, in recognition of the fact that teachers and students move from state to state. (1998)~~

B. Teacher Preparation

Because student achievement and teacher quality are inextricably intertwined, all stakeholders must assume ownership and responsibilities for their roles in the process. Therefore, NASBE supports the following:

- ~~1. Preservice teacher education programs that include clearly articulated standards, methods of evaluation, and accountability measures aligned with K-12 systems.~~
- ~~2. Teacher preparation programs that are performance-based with varied, early and sustained clinical experiences.~~
- ~~3. Requirements for the inclusion of multiculturalism in teacher education programs. This would include skills in linguistics, cross-cultural communication, and multiple learning styles. At least one clinical experience in a cultural setting different from the background of the student teacher should be required.~~
- ~~4. Participation by all beginning teachers in a supervised entry-year program. This program should be a cooperative effort between a teacher education program and a local school district.~~
- ~~5. Teacher preparation programs that include instruction in ethics and professionalism. (1999, 2000)~~

~~6. Educator preparation courses that cover the latest research on the significant implications of children's health on learning. (2011)~~

~~7. Educators being prepared to integrate health into overall lesson plans, such as reading health literature in English classes, manipulating health statistics in math classes, and including kinetic learning with physical activity in lesson plans. (2011)~~ [Note: concepts addressed under numbers 3, 5, 6, and 7 above were moved to "A. Teacher Preparation Leading to Licensure."]

C. E. Teacher Licensure and Certification

NASBE believes that:

1. State boards of education should have authority over teacher licensure and certification, ensuring that these policies are fully integrated with the state education program.
2. Initial approval to teach should be based on completion of an approved teacher education program (or alternative teacher preparation program) and demonstrated knowledge of basic skills, content area, child development, methods of instruction, and classroom management.
3. ~~States should limit and seek to eliminate the use of emergency certification.~~ If emergency ~~certification or transitional licensure~~ is employed, these staff should receive additional supervision and be required to make continual progress toward for full ~~certification-licensure~~. Schools should be limited in the proportion of staff with emergency credentials.
4. States should develop proficiency-based approval for teacher education programs. Policies on alternative approaches to certification must represent high standards and expectations in terms of knowledge of subject matter and clinical skills and experience. State boards should study possibilities for increasing reciprocity for certification of school personnel.
5. Each state should establish a process to examine the background, including any criminal record, of all school personnel to ensure they do not pose a threat to the emotional, psychological, or sexual well-being of the students with whom they work.

D. F. Educators for Next Generation Learning

The traditional model of education—where educators impart knowledge to students through lecture and students recite memorized facts and solve fundamental math and science problems to illustrate comprehension of the information—is no longer appropriate given the context of today's digitally based society. The Internet and efficient global communications have fundamentally changed how individuals access information. Today's generation of students is growing up in an environment where information is available anywhere and anytime on any topic imaginable. ~~These students find the methods used by schools in stark contrast with how they learn and interact outside the classroom.~~

Given this transformation, NASBE believes states should promote the following concepts and policies for Next Generation teaching and learning:

1. Educators must move beyond a focus on basic student learning goals (remembering, understanding, applying) to also embrace upper level skills, which include analyzing, evaluating, and creating and which are exemplified by the Common Core standards. Students should be expected to develop these skills in preparation for life and careers in today's—and tomorrow's—workforce world.
2. Educators should work collaboratively to foster reflective teaching practices as they work together to hone lesson plans, exchange insights about students' strengths and weaknesses, draw from the expertise each brings to the classroom, provide feedback from fellow educators, and ensure that the needs of the students are met.
3. Educators need to be given the flexibility to use various forms of technology in the learning environment.
4. State boards of education need to work with higher education institutions and accrediting entities to reexamine teacher preparation programs to ensure that future educators are entering the workforce with 21st century skills and have the ability to transfer those skills to today's learning environment.
5. State educator licensing boards need to redefine licensure and certification to include the demonstration of 21st century skills and broaden the role of professionals and paraprofessionals in the learning environment.

States and districts need to consistently invest time and resources in developing 21st century skills in their current workforce through intentional, practical professional development that promotes collaboration, reflective practices, and the integration of technology. (2011)

~~E. Professional Development for Teachers~~

- ~~1.—NASBE supports the concept of teacher development throughout the teacher's career.~~
- ~~2.—Professional growth plans should be developed by individual teachers in conjunction with district representatives in order to meet the identified needs of the teacher, the school and the district.~~

~~F. Teacher Evaluation~~

- ~~1.—NASBE believes that the primary purpose of teacher evaluation systems should be to strengthen the performance of practicing teachers. These programs should be integrated with local goal setting, testing, and staff development activities.~~
- ~~2.—Educator evaluations should be built around clear professional practice standards that encompass curriculum, culture (classroom, family, and community), individualized instruction, the learning relationship of teacher to student and student to teacher, the expectation of mastery for all, and creating a culture of trust, respect, and responsibility.~~

Public Education Positions for 2012

National Association of State Boards of Education

(Approved October 2011)

<u>Education Position Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. State Governance of Education	1
A. State Responsibility for Education	2
B. State Board Responsibility	2
C. State Board Structure	3
D. State Board Cooperation with Other Organizations and Agencies	3
E. Diversity in Educational Leadership	4
F. Student Involvement in Education Decisionmaking	4
G. Professional Development for State Board Members	4
H. Policy Review Cycles	4
2. School Improvement	5
A. State Education Standards	5
B. Balanced Systems of Assessment and Accountability	5
C. Accountability Systems	7
D. National Common Standards	8
E. School Structure	8
F. Alignment of the P-16 Education System	10
G. Core Curriculum	10
H. Reading Curriculum and Instruction	11
I. Mathematics Curriculum and Instruction	11
J. Library-Media Services	12
K. Career-Technical Education (CTE)	12
L. Class Size Reduction	13
M. Middle Schools	14
N. High Schools	15
O. Low-Performing Schools	16
P. Instructional Materials in Print, Electronic, and Other Media	16
Q. Choice among Public Schools	17
R. Charter Schools	17
S. State Longitudinal Data Systems	18
T. Principles for Instructional Materials in a Digital Age	19
U. Developing Education and Military Partnerships to Meet the Needs of Students	20

3. Diversity	21
A. Culturally Competent School System	21
B. English Language Learners	21
4. Family and Community	23
A. Family and Community Involvement in Schools	23
B. Support for Families	23
C. Censorship	23
D. Corporate Involvement in Schools	24
E. Contracting for Educational Services	24
F. Community Schools	25
G. School-Community Partnerships	25
5. Funding	26
A. Leadership for Education Funding	26
B. Responsibility for Federal Funds	26
C. Funding of Mandated Programs	26
D. Equitable Funding Distribution	26
E. Funding for Nonpublic Schools	27
F. Funding Nutrition Programs	27
G. School Trust Lands	27
H. Education Budget Priorities	27
6. Students	28
A. At-Risk Students	28
B. Alternative Schools for Students at Risk of Failing or Dropping Out of School	28
C. Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenthood	29
D. Dropout Prevention	29
E. Corporal Punishment	29
F. Youth Service	29
G. Early Learning Education Policies	29
H. School-age Child Care	30
I. Equal Education Opportunity	30
J. Students with Special Needs	31
K. Small Schools	31
L. Homeless Children	31
M. Adult Education	31
N. Employment Training Programs	32
O. Comprehensive Services	32
P. Character Education	32
Q. The Role of Schools in Confronting Social Issues	32
R. Civic Engagement and Ethical Behavior in a Global Society	33
S. Student Promotion and Retention	33
T. Athletic Participation	34

7. Personnel	34
A. Teacher Development, Supply, and Demand	34
B. Teacher Preparation	35
C. Teacher Licensure and Certification	35
D. Educators for Next Generation Learning	36
E. Professional Development for Teachers	37
F. Teacher Evaluation	37
G. Standards for Administrators	37
H. Professional Development Schools	37
I. School Leadership	38
8. Facilities	39
A. Building Construction and Safety	39
9. Technology	40
A. Technology Standards for Students and School Personnel	40
B. Technology and School Systems	40
C. e-Learning	41
10. Federal Role in Education	42
A. Federal Mission in Education	42
B. Federal Role in Education Governance	42
C. Federal Financing of Education	43
D. Nationally Mandated Assessments and Accountability	44
11. Health and Safety	46
A. Promotion of Student Health	46
B. Comprehensive Services	46
C. Violence and Its Impact on Schools and Learning	47

Public Education Positions of the National Association of State Boards of Education for 2012

(Approved by the Voting Delegates of the Association, October 2011)

PREAMBLE

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) believes people are the nation's most important resource, and that free, high-quality public education is of paramount importance to the strength of this country, the preservation of society, and the well-being of its people. Public education remains a foundation of democratic values, of citizen participation in the community, and of the nation's promise of equal opportunity for all.

The members of NASBE believe that all children can achieve high standards of learning, and are committed to making decisions that put the needs of young people ahead of all other considerations. Every individual child must be given the support to develop to his or her full potential. We therefore pledge to continue leadership efforts to improve public education by promoting effective state-level administration, quality education, equal opportunity, and adequate and equitable resources for each and every student.

Because achievement of these goals is a continuing process, NASBE encourages its members, in cooperation with students, families, educators, local school board members, business and community leaders and other interested citizens, to regularly examine their state's educational goals, policies and programs, and the means of achieving them. (1997)

State boards of education are advocates for all children and for public education. They reflect two deeply held American values—citizen governance of education and the separation of educational policymaking from partisan politics.

Major Sections of the Public Education Positions:

1. State Governance of Education
2. School Improvement
3. Diversity
4. Family and Community
5. Funding
6. Students
7. Personnel
8. Facilities
9. Technology
10. Federal Role in Education
11. Health and Safety

1. STATE GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATION

Citizen control over public education through the mechanism of governing boards is an enduring American tradition that is essential in making public education successful and that gives our decentralized educational system much of its vitality, diversity, and responsiveness. State board members—as citizen advocates of public education, as liaisons between educators and others involved in education policy, as consensus builders, and as policymakers—strengthen this tradition.

The ever-changing composition of state boards allows opinions of the public to be considered. Removing or weakening state boards in favor of control from governors or legislative committees is detrimental in a society committed to democratic principles and the need for strong involvement of citizens in education decision making. Sustaining the unique role of state boards of education is the best way to meet public concerns regarding education.

While respecting differences in states' educational governance structures, NASBE supports these governance principles:

A. State Responsibility for Education

The United States Constitution reserves to citizens of the states primary responsibility for the governance of education (Tenth Amendment). To carry out their responsibility, states have developed structures to plan, provide, and oversee the delivery of instructional services to children through state boards charged with the “general supervision” of public schools. Throughout the history of this country, the Congress has continued to recognize the preeminent role of the states in education even while targeting federal education funds for national priorities. NASBE believes that public education is the most fundamental obligation of state government and that decisions about educational governance structures should be left to individual states.

B. State Board Responsibility

Major policy and oversight responsibility is placed in constitutionally or statutorily created state boards, composed primarily of lay citizens. State boards have the primary responsibility for governing education, including vocational education, for setting educational policy, goals and priorities based on the best available information and research, and for continuously evaluating educational progress. (1997) NASBE adheres to the following general principles regarding state boards:

1. Every effort should be made to ensure that the full diversity of the population is represented on citizen boards.
2. While citizens who serve on state boards of education may be chosen because they are from a specific region, or constituency, they should then represent all the students in the state.
3. The charge to state boards is setting the long-term vision and direction that will make education meaningful for all students.

4. While the state role of state board members is often clearly defined by state constitutions or statutes, all state board members, regardless of how chosen, need to understand and respond to national issues that have an impact on education in their states.

C. State Board Structure

The educationally effective governing structure for education within a state includes a state board of education that determines general policy, with the policies administered by a chief state school officer who is hired and evaluated by the board. (1996)

D. State Board Cooperation with Other Organizations and Agencies

1. State board members should lead education efforts and include governors, legislators, chief state school officers, local school boards, parents, business leaders, and other members of the education community in developing and providing coherent, coordinated, thorough and efficient educational programs for all children. (1997)

In order to assist state boards in this mission, NASBE should maintain ongoing communication and cooperation with the representative organizations of these groups.

2. In order to achieve systemic education reform and fulfill individual students' needs at every level, state boards of education and postsecondary boards, which may include state boards of higher education, community college boards and others, should develop mutually supportive structures to ensure effective articulation of academic standards and assessments, enrollment eligibility requirements, preparation and development of education professionals, and other policies that have implications for the state's entire education system. (1997)

3. State boards should actively work with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to ensure that state-approved innovations and variations in education curricula, instructional methods, programs, and grading practices are accommodated in the determination of eligibility requirements for participation in postsecondary athletic activities and athletic scholarships. (1997)

4. State boards and chief state school officers have common concerns that are addressed by the organizations that represent them. Therefore, state boards are encouraged to schedule NASBE and chief state school officer issues for regular consideration at state board meetings.

5. The mutual concerns of state boards of education and local school boards necessitates ongoing, substantive communication and cooperation among the state board of education, local school boards, the state school boards' association, and the state department of education. As part of this effort, state boards should provide for local board member involvement on task forces, advisory councils, and other established bodies. At the national level, NASBE pledges itself to continuing communication and cooperation with the National School Boards Association (NSBA) around mutual concerns of education policy and improvement. (1999)

E. Diversity in Educational Leadership

State boards should take an active role in assuring broad cultural, ethnic, and gender representation in the state department of education, and on all state task forces, commissions, advisory boards, adoption committees, and working groups.

F. Student Involvement in Education Decisionmaking

Student involvement in education decision-making provides students with an increased understanding of the roles and responsibilities of policymakers and administrators, gives students an increased stake in their own education, and provides adults with a fresh perspective on the education system. Therefore, state boards of education should provide opportunities for meaningful student involvement in state education policymaking and should encourage school districts and school councils to provide similar opportunities for students at the local level. (1996, 1998)

G. Professional Development for State Board Members

State boards should devote attention and resources to the professional development of their members. This should include initial orientation and ongoing development to better understand their roles and responsibilities, to improve boardmanship skills, and to gain greater understanding of specific education issues. (1996)

H. Policy Review Cycles

State boards of education should make provisions to regularly review major policies. In addition, an evaluation process should be built into all decisions. (1996)

2. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The purpose of public schools is to educate all students to high standards, prepare them for productive careers, and encourage them to be life-long learners (1997). NASBE asserts that school improvement is, fundamentally:

- i. A moral imperative in that a high-quality education is a civil right;
- ii. A civic imperative in that a highly educated citizenry understands public issues as they become more complex.
- iii. An economic imperative in maintaining the United States' position in the world economy. (2005)

In order to achieve this goal, NASBE supports the following principles and school improvement efforts:

A. State Education Standards

1. States should create academic standards in all key subject areas at all levels, Pre-K 12, including standards for both content and student performance. Key subject areas should include language arts, mathematics, science, technology, citizenship, fine arts, health, and foreign languages/cultures. State standards should be measurable, broadly consistent with national standards, and regularly reviewed and improved. (1997)

2. Performance standards for all elements of the education system should be developed to assure that each student has the opportunity to receive instruction in a positive environment from well-prepared teachers, working with quality materials and technology. (1997)

3. States should provide technical assistance and support to schools and districts to assist them in implementing the state standards. (1997)

4. States should take measures to ensure that students who do not meet rigorous academic standards are provided with effective alternate delivery systems. (1999)

B. Balanced Systems of Assessment and Accountability

1. State assessment systems should be based on a definition of learning in terms of clear, succinct, and high standards that identify what students need to know and do to be college and career ready. Therefore, all states should:

- a. Have assessment systems that are designed to improve student learning. Recognizing that no single test serves all purposes, states need to create a comprehensive, balanced assessment system that includes both assessment *of* learning (reporting on what's been learned) as well as assessments *for* learning (providing ongoing feedback to teachers and students as learning progresses). The assessments—summative, formative, interim—should function as a coherent system that uses a variety of approaches to integrate assessment as part of the fabric of classroom teaching.

- b. Frequently evaluate assessments to ensure validity, reliability, and fairness, and to determine their impact on teaching and student learning.
 - c. Shift more attention to classroom-based assessments that permit a finer-grain analysis of student understanding through the use of a variety of performance-based tasks (e.g., open-ended responses, portfolios, technology-based items).
 - d. Ensure that teachers have the tools and training they need to strengthen the connection between assessment and instruction based on our knowledge of how students learn and how such learning can be measured.
 - e. Provide assessment results with user-friendly, transparent information that clearly describes differences in learning in a subject area in order to communicate effectively about student performance. Results should be communicated to a range of users, including teachers, students, and parents, in ways that position teachers and students as central actors in using results to guide teaching and individual instruction and to engage students in their own learning.
 - f. Develop appropriate assessments and accommodations for special education students and English language learners through extensive research and testing to ensure they are of high technical quality (e.g., valid, reliable, and aligned to standards). They should provide for a range of options (e.g., emphasis on universal design, the development of high-quality accommodation policies, and provision of alternate assessments) that adhere to professional testing standards and support high achievement levels.
 - g. Take advantage of the enormous possibilities offered through technology and its applications to integrate assessment and classroom teaching toward specific learning goals. Technology can contribute to powerful learning environments by embedding well-designed formative assessment strategies using highly engaging and innovative approaches consistent with how students learn.
2. State accountability should 1) focus on how the system (including school, district, and state levels) performs in a number of key areas and 2) make use of multiple indicators, of which summative assessment is only one. States should collect qualitative and quantitative measures, including student growth over time across the entire achievement continuum, as well as other indicators of school progress. The accountability index or composite should include long-term data that measure whether or not students have been effectively prepared for college or the workplace, including graduation data, college or workplace entry, and college completion.
3. To ensure that assessment systems achieve their purposes, states must establish standards for teacher and leader competencies regarding their knowledge and skills of how students learn, how learning can be assessed, and how these two must be closely integrated to guide classroom assessment and instruction. In addition:
- a. States must establish consistent teacher development standards that position assessment literacy as a major component for teacher licensure, accreditation for preparation programs, and teacher evaluations. States must also ensure that the national faculty responsible for

training teachers and leaders throughout the United States has the requisite training in the fundamentals of effective classroom assessment.

- b. States must ensure that at all levels of the system—classroom, school, and district—educators are provided with ongoing, high-quality professional development, along with the guidance, tools, infrastructure, and technology, to improve educators’ assessment literacy and their use of multiple assessments to measure students’ progress and respond to individual learning needs. (2010)
4. State boards should consider the significant potential of growth and value-added assessments models—when used in conjunction with other measures and supports—as tools to improve teaching and learning, evaluate programs and provide for effective equitable resource allocations. However, states should be aware that value-added assessment is not designed for high-stakes use in teacher evaluations, and that value-added assessment models need continued pilot testing, research, evaluation, and validation. (2006)

C. Accountability Systems

States should develop comprehensive accountability systems that foster continuous improvement of educational practices, with the ultimate goal of improving student learning. The key elements of accountability systems provide that:

1. Student achievement and performance are at the core of clear goals for the accountability system.
2. Schools are held accountable for the performance of all students.
3. The accountability system has broad political, business and community support so that it can be sustained over time, yet also be adaptable to necessary change.
4. The accountability system has clear incentives and motivates students and educators to achieve high standards of performance.
5. Accountability is based on multiple measures producing accurate, meaningful, and valid results.
6. The results of accountability measures should be used as the basis for a full range of interventions that include capacity building in addition to specific sanctions and rewards.
7. Education policies and the accountability system should send consistent messages about the state’s educational goals. (1998)

D. National Common Standards

NASBE supports the efforts of a national consortium of education organizations, states, and territories in its effort to develop high-quality, voluntary common standards for students across the country. NASBE holds to the following additional points regarding this effort:

1. The resulting standards must be rigorous, aligned with college- and career-readiness expectations, internationally benchmarked, and limited to mathematics and English language arts.
2. Participation in the common standards effort must be voluntary on the part of states, with state boards of education at the heart of an open and inclusive standards adoption process.
3. The federal government's role in common standards should be limited to funding for research and financial support of consortia of states in their development and implementation of common standards and related assessments.
4. The adoption of any common standards by individual states must not be a condition for the receipt of other federal aid.
5. While common standards are an important reform, they are not likely by themselves to result in higher student achievement without concurrent state implementation efforts that include improved teacher development and induction processes, aligned instructional materials and assessments, and robust student intervention systems for those struggling to meet standards.
6. In addition to their potential benefits for teaching and learning, common standards should be encouraged as a catalyst for lowering barriers for teacher certification reciprocity among states. (2009)

E. School Structure

Schools must be dynamic educational institutions that graduate students with the knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in the world. This requires a long term commitment of time, energy, and resources. States should:

1. assure that students in all schools have opportunities to:
 - learn and work cooperatively with other students,
 - engage in higher order thinking,
 - interact with teachers and other adults, and
 - participate in courses across the curriculum;
2. include students, educators, parents, business, and the broader community in significant school decisions;
3. focus on individual schools as the sites for change;
4. ensure that schools address the academic and non-academic needs of children and youth;

5. ensure that schools develop and sustain positive school climates that:

- generate a strong sense of community, with commonly shared goals and high expectations for students and staff,
- encourage faculty to work together to develop materials, plan lessons, and improve their teaching practices,
- encourage students and parents to actively participate in school life; and

6. have accountability systems that assess student performance, teacher effectiveness, school climate, and the effective use of resources at the school level. (1997)

7. Eliminate barriers for student learning based on the calendar, seat time, and fixed physical boundaries in order to create environments that actively promote and support innovation within and beyond the school walls. This includes state actions that:

- allow and support flexibility and innovation for districts, schools, and teachers in developing schedules/calendars;
- allow students more flexibility in accumulating credits in order to break away from restrictive Carnegie Unit and seat time requirements;
- call for school improvement plans to include a broader range of adequate yearly progress metrics, such as health, science and technology, arts, and safety goals;
- support dual credit/dual enrollment and other opportunities for students to learn outside of the traditional classroom;
- allow districts to create alternative pathways to student graduation such as service learning and apprenticeships;
- allow districts flexibility to add their own measures to state assessments. (2011)

8. Promote the use of technology to facilitate student learning that transcends the traditional building and school day. In particular,

- States should ensure that instructional materials policies allow schools to use technology to provide access to the most effective teaching and learning resources.
- Competency standards for educators should ensure that educators can effectively use technology for student engagement and achievement. Professional development should be offered to support the standards to ensure educator success.
- Technology should be used to provide real-time assessment and immediate support for student learning. (2011)

F. Alignment of the P-16 Education System

States should develop a structure to coordinate and address issues among the pre-kindergarten, K-12, and higher education systems. Among the actions states can take are:

1. Creation of a joint database or mechanism to link the databases of the K-12 and higher education systems.
2. Alignment of high school general education requirements with those of postsecondary education.

G. Core Curriculum

All students should have knowledge and expertise in broad curricular areas, including:

1. Language arts, to include writing, reading, speaking, listening, literature, and communication;
2. Mathematics, to include quantitative reasoning, problem solving, and the use and comprehension of data;
3. Scientific literacy, with an emphasis on hands-on, experiential learning;
4. Technology, to include the use of technology to locate, analyze, and communicate information and understanding of the implications, both positive and negative, of technology for individuals and society;
5. Citizenship, to include American and world history, civics and civic engagement, economics, and geography and a global perspective, as well as the promotion of such values as service to others, the dignity of work, sensitivity to our multicultural society, and the responsibilities of democracy;
6. Fine Arts, to help young people develop their creative and critical abilities and understand the relationships between the arts, other disciplines, and society, and promote personal expression;
7. Health topics, to be taught using a comprehensive approach combining physical fitness and general health information with HIV/AIDS education, sex education, and substance abuse education;
8. Knowledge of the languages and cultures of the world's peoples and of the interdependence of all peoples. This study should begin in the early grades; one of the benefits of the early study of foreign language is the understanding it brings to the study of English, and
9. Financial literacy, to include the concepts, knowledge, and skills that will provide students with a foundation for analyzing increasingly complex financial problems, with a focus on young people becoming knowledgeable consumers, investors, money managers, citizens, and members of a global workforce and society.

H. Reading Curriculum and Instruction

It is essential that all students learn to read well. To that end, every state should develop, adopt, and vigorously implement a statewide literacy plan to ensure that all students can read proficiently. Such plans must be comprehensive, multifaceted, and at the same time reside within the framework of the state's vision for standards-based education. As part of the plans, states should:

1. Set statewide literacy goals and standards, ensuring alignment with curricula and assessments, and raising literacy expectations across the curriculum for all students in all grades.
2. Ensure that teachers receive research-based preparation and professional development to provide effective, content-based literacy instruction.
3. Strategically use data in identifying student needs, designing cohesive policies, and evaluating the quality of implementation and impact of reading initiatives.
4. Require districts and schools to develop literacy plans that infuse research-based literacy instruction and support strategies in all content areas.
5. Provide districts and schools with funding, supports, and resources.
6. Ensure that assessment and reading improvement programs continue throughout kindergarten to twelfth grade.
7. Provide strong state guidance and oversight to ensure robust implementation of comprehensive quality literacy programs at the local level.
8. Encourage parents/caregivers, families, and community members to read to children, and encourage schools to use innovative techniques to increase the availability of reading materials and resources to parents and families. (2006)

I. Mathematics Curriculum and Instruction

States should have as a goal that all students complete a challenging, coherent, and focused K-12 mathematics curriculum which includes introductory algebra and geometry by the end of grade

9. In order to achieve this goal, states should work to ensure that:

1. Mathematics is taught by teachers who are well-prepared in appropriate content and techniques of teaching mathematics.
2. Graduation requirements prescribe that all students master a rigorous mathematics course of study.
3. Pre-service teacher education programs are aligned with state licensure/certification standards.

4. All persons teaching mathematics receive ongoing professional development consistent with the best available research.
5. Assessment and mathematics improvement programs continue throughout kindergarten to twelfth grade.
6. Mathematics assessments such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the Third International Mathematics and Science Survey (TIMSS), which are beneficial to states, should be continued. (1998)

J. Library-Media Services

Professional library-media specialists and a comprehensive library program with a wide variety of resources, including current technology, are essential to support student learning achievement and mastery of study and research skills. (1997)

K. Career-Technical Education (CTE)

1. State school systems should provide meaningful opportunities for all students to engage in rigorous and relevant career and technical education, both at the high school level and in the middle grades. States should actively work to provide a range of experiences that expose students to career-related clusters such as health, law, or the performing arts. The goal is to provide exposure for students that gives them the opportunity to plan and to choose their own path in life, whether that choice is work after high school, a direct route to college, or work that's followed by college at a later date.
2. State boards of education and business leaders should join forces to drive an education agenda that will promote 21st century learning that focuses on developing our nation's workforce and its citizens.
3. State boards of education should support the convening of other state-level stakeholders, such as the chamber of commerce, the workforce development board, the legislature, the governor, other labor-related agencies, community colleges and higher education, P-20 councils, and industry leaders in an effort to connect economic and education issues.
4. State boards of education should adopt policies to integrate CTE and academic coursework and standards, while providing multiple assessments to measure skill and knowledge attainment. States should also adopt policies to recognize students for career-focused learning.
5. School systems should ensure seamless transitions for students from high school to postsecondary and beyond. This transition is one of the biggest hurdles for many students. State boards should work with other policymaking bodies throughout their state to ensure an easy-to-navigate transition of credits and skill attainment from high school to work and postsecondary education.

6. States and local school systems need to develop policies to address quality, recruitment, and compensation for CTE instructors. Challenges include finding ways of incorporating skilled-trade experts into the classroom while continuing to provide high-quality instruction in core academics, as well as problems in recruiting high-quality candidates for CTE teaching positions when industry salaries are often higher than those offered to educators.

7. State and local school systems need to address the poor image of CTE with educators, parents, guidance counselors, and the public. This should include an aggressive campaign to educate school administrators, teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and students about the promise of high-quality, rigorous CTE programs. Policymakers and business leaders have to convince those with doubts that CTE is a viable option for preparing students for life-long learning. (2009)

L. Class Size Reduction

Reducing actual class sizes to 20 or fewer students per classroom teacher in kindergarten through the third grade has been shown to be effective in improving student achievement. NASBE supports state and federal efforts to reduce class sizes. However, class size reduction is only effective when accompanied by resources to provide adequate space, classroom supplies, professional development, and recruitment of new teachers. In addition, any state or federal effort to reduce class size should assure adequate, continuous funding. (1998, 1999)

M. Middle Schools

1. State boards of education should develop policy statements that recognize the importance of middle grades education and encourage the development of middle schools that have the following components:

- a. A rigorous academic program for all students that is aligned with state and local content standards, includes algebra I, and uses a variety of instructional approaches;
- b. Strong student engagement through such means as advisory programs, curricular relevancy, learning communities, and opportunities for virtual learning;
- c. Responsive support services for intervention with struggling students, beginning in the 6th grade;
- d. Practices that help students make smooth transitions from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school, ensuring that middle schools are an integral part of the P-16 system.

2. States should develop licensure standards for middle level teachers and administrators that will lead preparation institutions to include the following elements in their middle-level teacher education programs:

- a. Recruitment of middle grades educators as a critical need area;

- b. Study of the psycho-social and personal development of early adolescents;
- c. Broad academic background plus concentrations in at least two academic areas;
- d. Early and continuing field experiences in middle schools.

3. States should promote professional development for middle grades teachers and administrators that is focused, ongoing, and relevant to daily work of educators. These inservice experiences should be standards-based, deepen content knowledge, expand instructional skills, help educators use assessments and data to improve instruction, and provide follow-up assistance to help teachers use their newly gained knowledge and skills. (2009)

N. High Schools

The institution of the American high school must undergo sweeping improvements in order to prepare all students for today's economy. High schools must reject the notion that students with different abilities should be prepared for different futures. They must be willing and able to prepare all students to achieve both in postsecondary education and in the workforce without remediation. To accomplish this, policymakers should promote the following principles of high school reform:

1. High schools should be structured to provide a personalized learning experience for each student. This can be accomplished by:
 - a. Creating smaller schools or schools within schools;
 - b. Facilitating interdisciplinary courses and teacher teams;
 - c. Developing individual student plans for each student, which should be revisited at least annually;
 - d. Providing more intense, personalized counseling through reducing the student:counselor ratio or incorporating teacher advisories as part of the daily or weekly schedule; and
 - e. Adjusting the timeframe associated with high school so that all students can meet the standards at their own pace.
2. High schools need to reverse the long-standing trend which shows that family involvement tapers off when students reach high school. Secondary school students with involved families reach higher grades, complete more course credits, have better attendance, display fewer behavioral problems, and are better prepared for school.
3. The high school curriculum and pedagogy should include contextual learning, which relates what is taught to some real-world context. Ways to promote learning in context include curriculum integration, service learning, project-based learning, problem-based learning, and

work-based learning. In addition, learning environments should relate to the technology found in today's workplace.

4. Teaching staff of high schools should consist of quality educators who have been adequately prepared to teach a rigorous, standards-based curriculum to all students. All teachers must be prepared with appropriate pedagogical skills including the teaching of reading, basic academic skills, workplace skills, mastery of their specific content areas, and up-to-date knowledge of technology and how to use it effectively in the classroom. (2003)

O. Low-Performing Schools

Even as state academic standards take hold, and as students, schools, and districts are evaluated by state assessment systems that are tied to the new standards, it is clear that millions of students attend low-performing schools that are not meeting the standards that states and federal policymakers hope for them to achieve. These schools are now being identified by state accountability systems. However, the goal of standards and accountability systems should not be to distribute rewards and sanctions to schools based on achievement. Rather, the central goal of all education policies and programs needs to be school improvement for greater student achievement. In order to reach this goal, states should take the following actions:

1. Allocate funds to districts to ensure that all schools have the resources they need to attract and retain high-quality school leaders, high-quality teachers, and high-quality staff;
2. Develop and adopt effective teacher induction, support, and evaluation systems;
3. Ensure that all teachers are provided with quality professional development experiences that are related to state standards and continuous school improvement;
4. Encourage teacher and administrator preparation programs to locate in communities that need school leaders and teachers;
5. Provide fiscal resources, guidelines, and technical assistance to establish effective data systems to inform school improvement at all levels;
6. Develop a comprehensive, statewide plan for improving the persistently lowest-performing schools. The elements of such a state plan should include:
 - a. A strategy for building district capacity to turn around schools;
 - b. Guidance to school districts on turnaround options, their research base, and conditions and environments where they were proven to be successful;
 - c. State approval (or at the very least, monitoring) of local improvement plans;
 - d. Investments in leadership, particularly at the school level;
 - e. Requirement that all schools develop a school improvement plan;

- f. A system for tracking, analyzing, and disseminating results of ongoing restructuring efforts;
- g. A strategy for building the capacity of the state education agency to ensure it is able to carry out the state’s plan to help district improve low-performing schools;
- h. Options for schools that continue to miss AYP benchmarks even after restructuring; and
- i. Ongoing support for schools that exit restructuring. (2008; for more information, see NASBE’s report: *Meeting the Challenge: The State’s Role in Improving Low-Performing Schools through Restructuring*)

7. Promoting a strong connection between schools and families by ensuring that teacher and leadership preparation programs include a strong parent involvement component and that state mission statements and SEA staff members support parent involvement and promote parents as a resource; and

8. Helping schools build a community environment to support improvement through:

- a. Promoting high-quality preschool by setting standards for preschool curriculum that align with K-12 standards, setting standards for preschool teachers and evaluating teachers according to these standards, and providing funding for the establishment of high-quality preschool;
- b. Supporting business partnerships with low-performing schools; and
- c. Supporting integrated community and social services by:
 - i. Reviewing policies to ensure they support rather than impeded promising practices.
 - ii. Funding integrated service centers in targeted areas.
 - iii. Minimizing inter-departmental barriers at the state level. (2003)

P. Instructional Materials in Print, Electronic, and Other Media

- 1. State boards should provide leadership to ensure that textbook adoption procedures and criteria at the state and local levels reflect an increasingly diverse array of materials.
- 2. Materials should support the development of higher order cognitive thinking skills, rather than being merely attractive media that comprise a checklist of topics.
- 3. State boards should ensure that educators and students have access to a full range of curricular materials that present a wide range of viewpoints.

Q. Choice among Public Schools

1. Students and families should have the opportunity to choose among schools and programs within the public school system.
2. State boards should encourage innovation and a variety of quality education options for students. For any system of public school choice to work, state boards should ensure that all families are actively informed about the alternatives available to them.

R. Charter Schools

1. Publicly supported charter schools that contract for greater autonomy in exchange for strict accountability can be a viable educational option. The authority to grant public school charters should primarily lie with school districts, state boards of education, or with other entities that are also accountable to the public. Every chartering body must be able to give fair consideration to charter applicants and have the necessary capacity to assess instructional and business plans, compose valid time-specific contracts, and monitor student achievement and fiscal accountability on an ongoing basis. Procedures for canceling a charter due to poor student performance or other valid reasons should be fair, yet decisive.
2. State charter laws, policies, and procedures should address students' diverse learning needs including those of students with disabilities. Additionally, it is critical that laws, policies, and practices prevent charter schools from becoming instruments for the segregation of students based on the level of their academic ability.
3. Appeal mechanisms should be established in order to assure due process for charter applicants and holders. State boards must maintain ultimate oversight of all publicly funded schools, including charter schools.
4. State boards should ensure that every public charter school:
 - a. is nonsectarian and not-for-profit, and does not assess families for additional tuition;
 - b. is governed by an independent board knowledgeable about education and exercising full fiduciary responsibility;
 - c. actively informs families of their opportunities to apply for admission and admits students on the basis of a lottery if more students apply than can be accommodated;
 - d. submits sound instructional, academic assessment, staffing, financing, facilities, and fiscal management plans to its sponsoring entity;
 - e. meets or exceeds state-determined content standards and is subject to the state's academic accountability requirements;
 - f. endeavors to foster a cooperative relationship with its local school district;

- g. provides an annual audit and reports on audit results, student learning results and other indicators of school performance to its sponsoring agency;
- h. employs qualified teachers and administrators as per state and federal requirements;
- i. complies with all applicable federal, state and local civil rights laws and regulations, including those concerning the education of students with disabilities; and
- j. complies with all applicable public health and safety laws and regulations. (2004)

S. State Longitudinal Data Systems

1. Quality data is essential for improving education systems, classroom instruction, and student achievement. State boards of education should not only support the building of a complete longitudinal data system, but also create a culture of data use to ensure that this information is used in the effort to improve student achievement and ensure that student privacy protection is an inherent part of any data system.
2. NASBE recommends that all state data systems have the following essential elements, based in part on recommendations by the Data Quality Campaign:
 - a. A unique statewide student identifier;
 - b. Student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information;
 - c. Ability to match individual students' test records from year-to-year to measure academic growth;
 - d. Information on untested students;
 - e. Teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students;
 - f. Student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned;
 - g. Student-level college readiness test scores;
 - h. Student-level graduation and dropout data;
 - i. Ability to match student records between the P-12 and post-secondary system;
 - j. Data on student health indicators, including but not limited to mental health; tobacco, alcohol, and substance use; teen pregnancy; school safety; unintentional injuries; and physical fitness; and
 - k. A state data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability.

3. State boards of education should take the following steps to promote the use of longitudinal data:
 - a. Ensure the longitudinal data system facilitates the easy transfer of student records between and among schools and districts.
 - b. Appoint a data coordinator for the state who will ensure that data use is central to all instructional and management processes.
 - c. Create tools, resources, and services that will assist districts and schools in using data.
 - d. Develop statewide professional development programs for school personnel on accessing and using data from the state longitudinal data system.
 - e. Ensure that all graduates of the state’s teacher colleges and certification programs are trained in using data as an instructional tool. (2009)

T. Principles for Instructional Materials in a Digital Age

1. Recognizing the need for high-quality, innovative instructional materials to advance student achievement, NASBE recommends that states use the following principles for instructional materials:
 - a. They allow for flexible use and control over content by users to meet a range of instructional approaches and modalities and the individualized needs of all students, including access by students with disabilities.
 - b. They are closely aligned with state standards for what students should know and be able to do and with the state accountability system.
 - c. They are accessible “on demand” at the time and place of learning, whether in or out of school.
 - d. They are cost-effective and represent good value for the investment of public dollars.
 - e. They address the needs for teacher training on using the materials.
 - f. They are vetted by subject matter experts and educators to ensure academic quality for increased student achievement.
 - g. They are updated frequently to reflect new developments in the content areas and be consistent with the development of new standards and assessments.
 - h. They engage learners through multiple media (in print, online, audio, video), as well as through interaction and simulation.

- i. They are able to be supported by or grow from voluntary, collaborative inter-state efforts.
2. States should consider copyright, liability, and other legal issues in the adoption of instructional materials. (2010)

U. Developing Education and Military Partnerships to Meet the Needs of Students

Policymakers and educators can learn success strategies from many military training programs, which succeed with young people where others fail because of their attention to a holistic approach to student education and development. These program strategies, placed within a school context, provide a structured environment with personalized support that includes relevant curriculum aligned to desired outcomes, postsecondary planning services, and multiple pathways to graduation.

NASBE believes state and local policymakers should take steps to foster successful education-military partnerships and promote the use of successful educational strategies developed as part of military training programs. These steps include:

1. Evaluating and modifying policies to encourage student participation in programs that help young people become productive and responsible citizens.
2. Instituting cognitive and non-cognitive assessments, such as the Armed Service Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), as diagnostic tools to assist students as they plan for their transition from secondary education to postsecondary life.
3. Seeking out and promoting evidence-supported education programs and strategies, including military-themed/generated programs, that help prepare students for any postsecondary pathway: education, military service, or employment.
4. Taking advantage of possible educational partnerships with all branches of the armed services.
5. Leveraging state board authority over state school counseling mandates, guidance counselor certification requirements and school counseling programs so that counselors can better inform students and parents about evidence-supported education programs and strategies, including military-themed or generated programs, as well as help them create a postsecondary plan that examines all options in education, military service, or employment. (2011)

3. DIVERSITY: THE CHANGING FACE OF AMERICA'S SCHOOLS

A. Culturally Competent School System

In order to foster true democratic opportunity and participation, NASBE believes that policymakers and practitioners need to develop a culturally competent education system that helps all students and school staff interact constructively with individuals from diverse backgrounds; helps students develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they need to achieve to high standards; and fosters a renewed focus on the ideals that bind rather than divide all Americans.

Such a system addresses persistent underachievement, stereotyping, and intolerance by focusing on three related aims: 1) culturally competent schools encourage individuals to understand differences among groups of people; 2) culturally competent schools foster high levels of learning in all students; and 3) culturally competent schools strengthen the nation. In addition, a culturally competent school system:

1. Uses high-quality academic standards and standards- based accountability as the basis of instruction for all students, thereby assuring policymakers, educators, and parents that no group of students is being left behind in the back rooms of education.
2. Reports assessment data disaggregated by race or ethnicity, gender, income, special needs, and English language proficiency.
3. Adopts a curriculum that fosters cultural competency.
4. Demonstrates respect for students' identities and welcomes a diverse community to participate in schools.
5. Acknowledges students' diverse learning styles.
6. Ensures qualified personnel for all students.
7. Provides extra help for schools and students who need it.
8. Promotes in students a sense of national unity and civic responsibility while at the same time instilling an understanding of other cultures and their contributions to our society. (2002)

B. English Language Learners

1. State boards of education should consider establishing clear language learning goals, or revisiting and clarifying their existing goals, to guide the work of educators at every level and lay a rational foundation for further policy development. Such goals would include:

- a. expectations that English language learners will progress to academic proficiency in English and placement in regular, challenging classrooms as rapidly as possible, without

setting arbitrary, one-size-fits-all timelines that do not take into account the learning needs of individual students;

- b. expectations that all students will become proficient in a second language (or more), including reading, writing, speaking, and cultural understanding, and will be provided opportunities to do so at every educational level; and
- c. preservation of specific endangered heritage languages in the state by fostering new generations of speakers.

2. State boards of education should standardize how English language learners are identified and tracked.

3. State education leaders should use a variety of policy levers to recruit and prepare adequate numbers of specialized, highly qualified ESL and world language teachers.

4. State boards of education should require that all educators learn basic ESL concepts and techniques.

5. State boards of education should select/develop and administer a comprehensive system of valid and reliable assessments to hold schools accountable for students' English language proficiency and mastery of academic content. Guiding principles for such a system include the following:

- a. Multiple measures of performance, such as portfolio assessment, hands-on demonstrations, and performance-based assessment, should be employed to obtain a more comprehensive picture of students' language skills and content knowledge;
- b. School officials, in consultation with ESL-trained educators, should be permitted to determine when an English language learner has attained sufficient English proficiency that the student's academic progress can be appropriately assessed using an English language test;
- c. Content-area assessments in English should undergo rigorous review for language difficulty. Test questions should be modified to minimize unnecessary linguistic complexity and cultural bias without "dumbing down" the content being tested; and
- d. The literacy skills of an incoming ELL student should be assessed in both English and the student's native language, if possible. (2008; for more information, see NASBE's report, *E Pluribus Unum: English, Language Education, and America's Future*.)

4. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Family and community involvement in children’s learning and in helping schools achieve their mission is key to successful education systems. NASBE believes that the following actions and concepts will help foster productive relationships among schools, families, and communities:

A. Family and Community Involvement in Schools

1. State boards of education should support policies and programs to encourage parent involvement in all aspects of their children’s education, including specific learning activities, volunteering in classrooms and school programs, and governance and advocacy in education.
2. Activities to promote parent involvement should include training for parents, teachers, and administrators; resources to support, assess and disseminate model local programs and materials; efforts to enhance local leadership and coordination of parent involvement; and outreach programs to educate parents as to their responsibilities regarding the behavior, health, and education of their children.
3. Community involvement should be fostered in forms such as school/business partnerships, provision of comprehensive services to children and youth, mentoring programs, and community service activities. State leadership should include training for educators; resources to develop, assess, and disseminate model local projects; and direct state-level efforts to work with the private sector, foundations, and other public agencies.
4. State boards should encourage cooperation among local schools and community agencies in establishing a range of field-based educational opportunities for all school age students. These programs should meet state education standards so that academic credit may be awarded.

B. Support for Families

Family members are a child’s first and most influential teachers. Compelling evidence indicates that the sensory and emotional environments of infants and young children affect their development in profound ways. Assisting families to provide a solid foundation for their children’s later education is cost-effective for society and for state government. State boards should lend support to efforts to ensure access to maternal and child health services, nutrition services, quality day care, family literacy programs, parenting education, early childhood education, and early detection and intervention programs that help families overcome impediments to children’s learning. (1997)

C. Censorship

Parents have a legitimate concern about books or programs that may shape the morals, prejudices, or behavior of their children. Because of attempts to censor materials being used in public school systems, local school boards should adopt policies and procedures to receive and review requests that challenge public school practices and programs. Community members

should be aware of their rights to voice their opinions about school practices and programs and be encouraged to do so within an appropriate administrative forum.

D. Corporate Involvement in Schools

School-business relationships based on sound principles can contribute to high quality education. However, compulsory attendance confers on educators an obligation to protect the welfare of their students and the integrity of the learning environment. Therefore, when working with businesses, schools must ensure that educational values are not distorted in the process. Positive school-business relationships should be ethical and structured in accordance with the following principles:

1. Selling or providing access to a captive audience in the classroom for commercial purposes is exploitation and a violation of the public trust.
2. Corporate involvement shall not require students to observe, listen to, or read commercial advertising.
3. Programs of corporate involvement must be structured to meet an identified education need, not a commercial motive, and must be evaluated for educational effectiveness by the school/district on an ongoing basis. Corporate involvement must support the goals and objectives of the schools.
4. Sponsor recognition and corporate logos should be for identification rather than commercial purposes.
5. Schools and educators should hold sponsored and donated materials to the same standards used for the selection and purchase of curriculum materials.
6. Corporate involvement programs should not limit the discretion of schools and teachers in the use of sponsored materials. (1998)

E. Contracting for Educational Services

In the future, private enterprise, both profit and not-for-profit, may play an important role in public schools. States should take a number of actions to ensure that they are prepared.

1. States should develop standards for private concerns doing business with public schools. The standards should require that contracts for such services specify results and include real penalties for failure to achieve them.
2. State boards should ensure that privately managed public schools are included in the state's accountability system and held to the same standards as other schools in the state. Privately managed districts should be subject to the same corrective actions as other districts in the state.
3. State boards should review and update, as appropriate, their state's regulations regarding the authority given to local boards for contracting with private concerns.

4. State boards should review their licensing requirements for superintendents and other administrators, both to provide flexibility in hiring and to ensure that administrators have the managerial skills needed for today's schools and districts. (1998)

F. Community Schools

1. Community schools are public education facilities that are open beyond the traditional school day to provide academic, extra-curricular, recreational, health, social services, and work force preparation programs for people of all ages.

2. State boards of education can play an active role in fostering community schools by developing and/or supporting school-community programs, advocating the flexible use of state and local funds to allow for pooling of resources from different agencies and sources, and garnering support for community schools by promoting their benefits through policy statements, public dialogue, and testimony. (1998)

G. School-Community Partnerships

State boards of education should leverage their leadership and policymaking roles to promote the importance of school-community partnerships as part of comprehensive education and dropout prevention plans. State boards can do this by:

- a. Creating a communication plan to inform students, parents, other stakeholders, department of education staff, districts, and schools on community and education issues and how each of these individuals and entities can be involved.
- b. Leading by example as they develop and facilitate partnerships, as well as support local collaborations that connect state-level policymakers to workforce development, higher education, families, and the community at-large.
- c. Promoting partnerships and dropout prevention initiatives by providing small grants to schools and districts or making sure currently available resources are allocated appropriately.
- d. Using their role as policymakers to examine current policies and ensuring they encourage, support, and sustain best practice models of school-community partnerships and dropout prevention
- e. Creating a systemic, comprehensive education framework around an inclusive vision for student success that defines and includes the specific roles of parents, businesses, the faith community, and other community, mental, and physical health organizations.
- f. Developing a longitudinal, comprehensive data system that includes students' academic, behavioral, and health data, is able to provide real-time information, and can flag students who may need early intervention programs and services.

- g. Creating multiple pathways to graduation and opportunities to gain and apply knowledge and skills (e.g., through service learning or career technical courses) that will require strategic school-community partnerships. (2010)

5. FUNDING

Each state must provide adequate financial support for public education within its boundaries. NASBE supports the following concepts:

A. Leadership for Education Funding

State boards should lead efforts to initiate and revise educational funding to provide quality education for all students enrolled in public schools. This leadership should include:

1. informing state legislators and all other citizens of the financial needs of public schools;
2. accounting to them for the use made of state funds and the accomplishments of the public school system; and
3. advocating, in coalition with state policymakers, local districts and other stakeholders, for consistent funding mechanisms to ensure that all students attend schools with adequate facilities and equipment. (1997)

B. Responsibility for Federal Funds

Each state education agency should receive, administer, and account for all federal education funds. Local school districts should implement these specific expenditures within federal and state guidelines.

C. Funding of Mandated Programs

Whenever state or federal mandates result in added costs to state agencies or local districts, the mandating authority should provide funding to defray such costs.

D. Equitable Funding Distribution

State boards should advocate school finance mechanisms that distribute education resources equitably across the state and help reduce funding disparities between rich and poor districts.

E. Funding for Nonpublic Schools

There should be no use of public funds nor tax credits given for vouchers or scholarships to nonpublic schools.

F. Funding Nutrition Programs

Since adequate nourishment for children is critical to their health and ability to learn, state and federal funding to assure adequate maternal and child nutrition should be a high priority.

G. School Trust Lands

1. States should make every effort to maximize financial returns from school trust lands. (1996)
2. When school trust lands are included in open space or federal preserves such as national parks, national monuments and national forests, there should be adequate, just and timely compensation for these claims. (1996) (2003)

H. Education Budget Priorities

Budget priorities in difficult economic times should place highest priority on areas directly affecting student achievement. (2009)

6. STUDENTS

NASBE believes that education should address the individual needs of each student. Each state board should assume an active leadership role to identify educational needs, priorities and plans of implementation for the state, based on these program principles:

A. At-Risk Students

1. Programs for students at risk of school failure should include the following components:

- early interventions supported by monitoring, assessment, and follow-up;
- an effective learning environment;
- preparation of all staff to work with at-risk youth;
- high expectations in academics and student behavior; and
- linkages among schools, juvenile courts, and other social services agencies.

2. Fiscal support should be provided by the states to school districts containing a high concentration of children at risk of educational failure.

3. State boards should make at-risk youth a regular agenda item for their policy review cycles.

B. Alternative Schools for Students at Risk of Failing or Dropping Out of School

Successful alternative education programs and schools can help students who are not succeeding in the traditional school setting. State boards should ensure that alternative schools and programs for at-risk students have the following characteristics:

1. They adhere to state education standards.

2. They enforce well-defined standards of behavior.

3. They provide the assessment and support services needed to clearly identify and address the cognitive, emotional, health and socio-economic factors affecting the education and development of their students. These services may be provided directly or through cooperation with other agencies.

4. They maintain an appropriate student-to-staff ratio.

5. They maintain a rigorous program for parental involvement.

6. They maintain ongoing professional and staff development.

7. They maintain a safe environment.

8. They make appropriate life skills and job training available to all students. (1998)

C. Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenthood

- 1 Schools should provide the information and skills necessary to assist students in avoiding adolescent pregnancy. Both male and female students must understand the impact of early parenthood.
2. In cases of adolescent pregnancy and/or parenthood, all related programs, services, supports, and policies should be provided to both the male and female;
3. Schools should coordinate with community teen pregnancy prevention activities and services for pregnant and parenting teens to develop comprehensive prevention plans. (1998)

D. Dropout Prevention

State boards should lead in establishing comprehensive dropout prevention programs. In particular they should:

1. Help schools provide students with access to various academic, health, and social services need to complete their education; 2. Establish policies for identifying and retrieving students who have already left the system.
3. Work with state departments of education and local districts to collect accurate data on at-risk students and dropouts.

E. Corporal Punishment

Child abuse, including the psychological maltreatment of children and the use of corporal punishment in schools, is wrong and should be condemned.

F. Youth Service

State boards should encourage all schools to offer community service programs as an integral part of the learning process. State boards should foster these activities by:

1. ensuring that service learning programs help students make connections between their service experiences and the rest of the educational program; and
2. ensuring that service learning experiences are monitored and evaluated;

G. Early Learning Education Policies

Preschool child development programs have significant long term benefits for learning. Therefore, NASBE supports a wide variety of public, voluntary, and private arrangements for

preschool development programs backed by a statewide vision for high quality early education. States developing preschool systems should consider having:

1. Aligned, comprehensive prekindergarten through grade three early learning standards. Core requirements and standards for programs and professional development should reflect the research on effective early learning and development and address the capacity of programs to deliver quality instruction.
2. Accountability based on a continuous improvement approach that includes ongoing evaluation to assess a program's plan for meeting early learning needs, the quality of its implementation, and its impact on children and families. Accountability systems should use multiple age-appropriate indicators of both how children are progressing and the quality dimensions of classrooms so that needed improvements and professional development can be identified.
3. State standards for teachers and preparation programs should require early childhood education teachers to have a Bachelor's degree and specialized early childhood training at the college level consistent with a common vision of high-quality early education.
4. Plans for increasing access to high-quality preschool programs, beginning with children from low-income families.

H. School-age Child Care

State Boards should encourage the coordination and extension of before- and after-school child care to unsupervised school age children. Such programs should ensure that all staff possess the training, credentials, and/or certification to meet the unique needs of the children participating.

I. Equal Educational Opportunity

1. NASBE vigorously supports equal educational opportunity.
2. American public schools are committed to educating all students. This commitment to equal educational opportunity means that schools must address the educational, social, and personal needs of diverse sets of students, including different racial and ethnic groups, females and males, and students with special needs. In addressing equal educational opportunity, state boards should strive for excellence without forsaking equity and strive for equity without forsaking excellence. Insuring these dual goals requires constant vigilance that one is not sacrificed in pursuing the other.
3. State boards should provide leadership in eliminating the stereotyping and discrimination on the basis of sex, age, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic background and national origin in curriculum materials, counseling methods and other education processes.

4. State board policies should be free of gender bias. In addition, NASBE supports ongoing efforts to encourage students of either sex to enter fields in which they have been traditionally under-represented.

J. Students with Special Needs

1. To ensure equal educational opportunities, services should be provided for special student needs. Learning programs should identify and address the individual needs and learning styles of all students, including those who are disabled, disadvantaged, migrant, gifted or talented, parenting or pregnant, minority or of limited English proficiency.
2. State boards should ensure that policies are developed and implemented which guarantee that all students are educated in school environments that include rather than exclude them. Inclusion means that all children must be educated in supported, heterogeneous, age-appropriate, natural, child-focused school environments for the purpose of preparing them for full participation in our diverse and integrated society.

K. Small Schools

Small schools and schools in rural areas commonly face special problems associated with distance, sparse population, poverty, and staffing. State boards must ensure there are programs that effectively meet the needs of children in such schools. Educational technology and shared services should be among the approaches used to alleviate the unique problems of small and rural schools.

L. Homeless Children

Studies show that the number of homeless families with children continues to grow and that many of these children do not attend school on a regular basis. In order to address this situation, NASBE:

1. supports efforts to increase awareness about homeless children in the state; and identify state laws, policies, and practices that impede their access to free and appropriate education; and
2. encourages state boards to work collaboratively with the state legislature and other organizations to ensure these students have access to a coordinated network of services.

M. Adult Education

NASBE supports efforts to strengthen efforts toward comprehensive statewide planning for a continuum of educational programs for adults.

N. Employment Training Programs

NASBE supports joint efforts among school districts, postsecondary institutions, profit, and nonprofit sectors to offer employment training programs that:

1. are available to all students;
2. coordinate curriculum content and programs in order to meet state labor market opportunities;
3. provide academic credit for appropriate workplace experiences; and;
4. encourage employers to utilize both experienced staff and certified instructors in employment training programs.

O. Comprehensive Services

1. The nation's schools and social service agencies should work together to solve difficult and complex problems and integrate services for young people and families in need. Such groups as preschool children, abused and neglected children, school-aged parents, youth in correctional institutions, families living in poverty, and adults in need of additional training require the services of a variety of agencies and would benefit from improved coordination.

2. Research shows that health and nutrition are linked to a student's ability to learn to high standards. State boards of education, along with other policymakers, should seek systemic change to ensure the provision of a comprehensive, whole-family approach in service delivery. (1997)

P. Character Education

1. Schools should provide instruction to students in core character qualities that transcend cultural, religious, and socioeconomic differences such as common courtesy, respect for person and property, civic and personal responsibility, honesty, and fairness. (1998)

2. Schools should provide a proactive, positive, skill-building approach for the teaching and learning of successful student behavior. (2008)

3. State boards should encourage local school districts to promote the principles of character education and development that will foster positive character traits in students. (1998)

Q. The Role of Schools in Confronting Social Issues

The social context in which students live has an impact on their ability to learn and effectively transition into adulthood. This is an issue that is critical to schools but one they should not be expected to address alone. Nevertheless, schools have an important role to play in addressing the

needs of students by helping them succeed academically and supporting their growth towards successful, productive, and healthy adult lives.

1. NASBE supports state development of guidelines for positive environments that foster academic achievement and support the developmental needs of children and youth.
2. State Boards of Education should take a leadership role in working with other state policymakers to create a shared vision and sense of responsibility for helping children and youth succeed.
3. State Boards of Education should work with other stakeholders collaboratively to identify and use resources available to help schools provide safe, positive learning environments for student needs.
4. Research shows that health and nutrition are linked to a student's ability to learn to high standards. State boards of education, along with other policymakers, should seek systemic change to ensure the provision of a comprehensive, whole-family approach in service delivery. (1997, 1999)

R. Civic Engagement and Ethical Behavior in a Global Society

Promoting civic engagement in our schools and among our students is fundamental to preserving our traditional American values of self-government and our leadership among nations. NASBE encourages states to reinvigorate citizenship education by ensuring that students have the knowledge, skills, and disposition to engage effectively in their rapidly expanding worlds by:

1. Incorporating civic learning into standards, pedagogy, assessment, and accountability policies whenever possible.
2. Encouraging schools to work with community organizations to offer experiential opportunities that are relevant to students' everyday lives and to academics, as well as encouraging experiential learning through extra-curricular activities; and
3. Encouraging educators to include ethical discussion and lessons throughout the school day. (2007)

S. Student Promotion and Retention

1. Both promoting students who do not achieve state education standards ("social promotion") and retention in grade should be considered options of last resort. Rather, state boards should ensure that every student receives the educational services required to reach the standards. Further, state boards should advocate:

- a. early childhood assessment, intervention, and education programs that prepare young children to succeed in school;

b. ongoing assessment of student progress in meeting education standards, using more than one measure, to identify weaknesses at an early stage so that timely interventions can be applied; and

c. adequate resources to schools for preventive and remedial interventions, including staff professional development. (2000)

T. Athletic Participation

It is recognized that student participation in extra-curricular athletic activity is predicated on activities that are embedded in a healthy school environment designed to ensure appropriate academic and athletic programs. To this end it is important that:

- a. Athletic eligibility is dependent on the student's progress towards the successful completion of high school education as defined by the state;
- b. State Boards of Education consider policies that test and monitor the use of performance-enhancing drugs by high school athletes;
- c. State Boards of Education provide for coaching excellence by reviewing certification and professional development requirements and, if absent, establish certification and professional development requirements for all coaches. (2005)

7. PERSONNEL

State boards of education have a fundamental responsibility to ensure that all school personnel have the skills, knowledge and attributes to do their jobs; continue to improve professionally throughout their careers; and receive appropriate compensation. In order to help boards fulfill this charge, NASBE supports the following:

A. Teacher Development, Supply, and Demand

1. Improving the quality and quantity of teachers, which requires states to develop standards-based systems of teacher preparation, evaluation and development while recruiting promising teacher candidates.

2. Providing teachers with working conditions and professional growth opportunities that encourage retention.

3. Nationally, colleges prepare sufficient numbers of teachers, but these teachers often fail to enter the field or leave the field soon after arriving, fail to become certified in high-need subject areas, or avoid jobs in urban and rural districts that need teachers most. Investing in attracting more new teachers to the field is necessary but not sufficient to alleviate teacher shortages. States must also develop policies that improve teacher retention, distribution, and diversity.

4. Developing state licensure and certification programs that require teachers to demonstrate progressively higher-level knowledge and skills to help students achieve high standards.
5. Working in regional and national groups to raise the quality of teaching, in recognition of the fact that teachers and students move from state to state. (1998)

B. Teacher Preparation

Because student achievement and teacher quality are inextricably intertwined, all stakeholders must assume ownership and responsibilities for their roles in the process. Therefore, NASBE supports the following:

1. Preservice teacher education programs that include clearly articulated standards, methods of evaluation, and accountability measures aligned with K-12 systems.
2. Teacher preparation programs that are performance-based with varied, early and sustained clinical experiences.
3. Requirements for the inclusion of multiculturalism in teacher education programs. This would include skills in linguistics, cross-cultural communication, and multiple learning styles. At least one clinical experience in a cultural setting different from the background of the student teacher should be required.
4. Participation by all beginning teachers in a supervised entry-year program. This program should be a cooperative effort between a teacher education program and a local school district.
5. Teacher preparation programs that include instruction in ethics and professionalism. (1999, 2000)
6. Educator preparation courses that cover the latest research on the significant implications of children's health on learning. (2011)
7. Educators being prepared to integrate health into overall lesson plans, such as reading health literature in English classes, manipulating health statistics in math classes, and including kinetic learning with physical activity in lesson plans. (2011)

C. Teacher Licensure and Certification

NASBE believes that:

1. State boards of education should have authority over teacher licensure and certification, ensuring that these policies are fully integrated with the state education program.
2. Initial approval to teach should be based on completion of an approved teacher education program (or alternative teacher preparation program) and demonstrated knowledge of basic skills, content area, child development, methods of instruction, and classroom management.

3. States should limit and seek to eliminate the use of emergency certification. If emergency certification is employed, these staff should receive additional supervision and be required to make continual progress toward full certification. Schools should be limited in the proportion of staff with emergency credentials.

4. States should develop proficiency-based approval for teacher education programs. Policies on alternative approaches to certification must represent high standards and expectations in terms of knowledge of subject matter and clinical skills and experience. State boards should study possibilities for increasing reciprocity for certification of school personnel.

5. Each state should establish a process to examine the background, including any criminal record, of all school personnel to ensure they do not pose a threat to the emotional, psychological, or sexual well-being of the students with whom they work.

D. Educators for Next Generation Learning

The traditional model of education—where educators impart knowledge to students through lecture and students recite memorized facts and solve fundamental math and science problems to illustrate comprehension of the information—is no longer appropriate given the context of today’s digitally based society. The Internet and efficient global communications have fundamentally changed how individuals access information. Today’s generation of students is growing up in an environment where information is available anywhere and anytime on any topic imaginable. These students find the methods used by schools in stark contrast with how they learn and interact outside the classroom.

Given this transformation, NASBE believes states should promote the following concepts and policies for Next Generation teaching and learning:

1. Educators must move beyond a focus on basic student learning goals (remembering, understanding, applying) to also embrace upper level skills, which include analyzing, evaluating, and creating and which are exemplified by the Common Core standards. Students should be expected to develop these skills in preparation for careers in today’s—and tomorrow’s—workforce.
2. Educators should work collaboratively to foster reflective teaching practices as they work together to hone lesson plans, exchange insights about students’ strengths and weaknesses, draw from the expertise each brings to the classroom, provide feedback from fellow educators, and ensure that the needs of the students are met.
3. Educators need to be given the flexibility to use various forms of technology in the learning environment.
4. State boards of education need to work with higher education institutions and accrediting entities to reexamine preparation programs to ensure that future educators are entering the workforce with 21st century skills and have the ability to transfer those skills to today’s learning environment.

5. State educator licensing boards need to redefine licensure and certification to include the demonstration of 21st century skills and broaden the role of professionals and paraprofessionals in the learning environment.

States and districts need to consistently invest time and resources in developing 21st century skills in their current workforce through intentional, practical professional development that promotes collaboration, reflective practices, and the integration of technology. (2011)

E. Professional Development for Teachers

1. NASBE supports the concept of teacher development throughout the teacher's career.
2. Professional growth plans should be developed by individual teachers in conjunction with district representatives in order to meet the identified needs of the teacher, the school and the district.

F. Teacher Evaluation

1. NASBE believes that the primary purpose of teacher evaluation systems should be to strengthen the performance of practicing teachers. These programs should be integrated with local goal setting, testing, and staff development activities.
2. Educator evaluations should be built around clear professional practice standards that encompass curriculum, culture (classroom, family, and community), individualized instruction, the learning relationship of teacher to student and student to teacher, the expectation of mastery for all, and creating a culture of trust, respect, and responsibility.

G. Standards for Administrators

NASBE supports the development and application of standards and competencies in leadership, management, evaluation of curriculum and supervision of instruction in order to adequately prepare public school administrators.

H. Professional Development Schools

Professional Development Schools are collaborative, PreK-16 structures where public school teachers and administrators, district personnel, and university education faculty work together to prepare new teachers, provide learning experiences for veteran teachers and higher education faculty, support research to improve teaching, assure that new and veteran teachers are proficient in teaching to the state's academic standards, and work to improve the school program. Given growing evidence that such collaborations help foster effective systemic school improvements and provide more effective training experiences to new and aspiring teachers, NASBE believes states should take steps to encourage the creation of professional development schools within their states. These steps may include:

1. Developing criteria upon which schools will be judged for inclusion as a professional development school;
2. Developing guidelines or standards for professional development schools that assure active involvement of the participants;
3. Ensuring that in all locations, including those with high populations of minority students, participate as professional development schools;
4. Providing support for those working in professional development schools, including information resources, release time for teachers working on professional development teams, and technical assistance and supplemental funding for professional development schools; and
5. Establishing an evaluation plan to determine the short and long-term effects of professional development schools. (1999)

I. School Leadership

Schools across the nation face an increasing number of vacancies in the principal's position, with fewer applicants for these jobs. Yet the need for effective principals is greater than ever. Factors contributing to the principal shortage include increasing job responsibilities and time commitments; increased pressure to improve school performance; lack of the necessary autonomy and supports; and, in some systems, insufficient pay or recognition. State and local actions need to address this issue:

1. State leaders should publicly and consistently assert the importance of principals as instructional leaders.
2. State policymakers should critically assess the range of responsibilities placed on school principals, and establish controls for managing demands which state policies placed on them.
3. Principals should be given necessary support and decision-making autonomy commensurate with their responsibilities.
4. State policies should promote school sizes and configurations that allow principals to perform as instructional leaders and effective managers.
5. Pay for principals should provide an incentive for job applicants.
6. Preparation, recruitment policies, licensure requirements, and performance assessments of principals must be aligned with the emphasis on instructional leadership.
7. State boards should foster meaningful, ongoing leadership training for principals to help prepare and develop principals and principal candidates. (1999)

8. FACILITIES

School buildings and infrastructure are critical components of a sound education system, and therefore NASBE recommends the following:

A. Building Construction and Safety

1. School facilities policies that assure planning based on considerations of instructional needs, safety, accessibility, equity, health promotion, and staff support and development. Plans should address total costs including construction, maintenance, and operation. (1997)
2. States should create mechanisms to ensure that districts and schools have the tools and information they need to plan and implement building designs that help achieve their educational plans. (1997)
3. Schools or districts receiving state assistance for facility construction, renovation or support should be required to submit long term maintenance plans. (1997)
4. To assure the health and safety of children in school facilities, states should encourage local districts to explore potential or existing hazards, including those resulting from the use of harmful substances, and should assist districts in paying for the cost of removing such substances.

9. TECHNOLOGY

NASBE believes that all students must have access to the technological tools they need to achieve high standards, and that educators must master proven instructional tools and strategies. Because the world community is increasingly dependent on technology, it is also imperative that expectations for student achievement include technological skills standards.

A. Technology Standards for Students and School Personnel

NASBE believes that:

1. All students should have the skills necessary to operate computer-based technologies; be able to use technology to locate, manage, and analyze information; be able to use technology to communicate ideas and information; and understand the impact of technology on individuals and society.
2. Teachers and administrators should receive appropriate professional development to enable them to remain abreast of advances in technology.
3. Certification and licensure standards should require that all teachers can effectively use instructional technology. Requirements should be broad enough to allow a wide range of teachers and specialists to teach technological skills;
4. States should negotiate with their neighbors on the cross-state approval of distance learning teachers and of instructional courses and materials.

B. Technology and School Systems

NASBE believes that state boards of education should provide leadership in the following areas:

1. Ensuring that all students have sufficient access to computers and other advanced technological tools and services, including access to the Internet.
2. Establishing statewide infrastructures for affordable telecommunications that will allow educators and students access to information resources and improve communication.
3. Developing incentives for local districts and schools to establish innovative technology learning projects.
4. Development of state technology centers that can:
 - document the use of technologies in the state's schools;
 - publicize the achievements and elements of successful model projects; and
 - monitor and assess the uses of technology to determine which are the most efficient, effective and capable of replication.

5. Working with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), state Public Utilities Commissions, and others in reshaping interstate and intrastate telecommunications policies and advocating for the interests of the state's schools in telecommunications reforms.

C. e-Learning

NASBE believes that evidence to date convincingly demonstrates that electronically delivered education, when used appropriately, can improve how students learn, can improve what students learn, and can deliver high-quality learning opportunities to all children. State education policymakers should seize the opportunity to take the lead to assure that e-learning is used well and strengthens the education system. To that end, policymakers should develop sound e-learning policy that:

1. Empowers families by offering them new choices among different ways of organizing and delivering learning services.

2. Assures equity by

- Providing every student access to robust equipment and the Internet at school;
- Ensuring high-quality educators for all children;
- Advocating no-cost or low-cost after-school access to e-learning opportunities;
- Providing advanced coursework for students wishing to move beyond the standard curriculum; and
- Supplying technologies to assist students with special needs.

3. Delivers quality e-instruction to learners by

- Promoting online courses for high school and postsecondary credit and the universal availability of virtual schools; and
- Providing other quality e-learning resources.

4. Protects children through policies that address appropriate student use of the Internet, privacy protection, and advertising in public schools. (See *Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, Any Pace: Taking the Lead on e-Learning Policy*, the report of NASBE's study group on e-Learning: The Future of Education, 2001.)

10. FEDERAL ROLE IN EDUCATION

Given the importance of public education as a foundation of a democratic society and a strong economy, NASBE believes the federal government has a primary responsibility to identify the national interest and goals in education and provide leadership to ensure that these goals are being met. Accordingly, NASBE holds the following positions:

A. Federal Mission in Education

1. The primary responsibility for education rests with the states. But given the national interest in having an educated populace, NASBE supports the role of the federal government, through laws such as the No Child Left Behind Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the Perkins Vocational-Technical Education Act, in promoting a national vision for an education system that affords every child the opportunity to become a healthy, literate, responsible, economically self-sufficient, and productive adult. (2006)

Within these federal laws, the role of the U.S. Department of Education should be to provide states with resources and assistance and hold them accountable for results, while giving states the flexibility to determine the manner in which they reach the goals specified in the laws. (2006)

2. The federal government should support a Department of Education headed by a cabinet-level secretary. (1996)

3. The federal government, working in cooperation with states, should help communities and schools meet the needs of special populations, including students who are socio-economically disadvantaged, minority students, students with limited English proficiency and students with disabilities.

4. The federal government, in cooperation with states and localities, must work to protect the constitutional and civil rights of all students and school personnel.

5. The federal government should provide assistance to states and localities in achieving national education goals.

6. The federal government should undertake activities to promote research, evaluation and dissemination of developments in curriculum, teaching, learning and the management of schools.

7. The federal government should be instrumental in collecting and analyzing data, statistics, and information about education generally.

B. Federal Role in Education Governance

1. Each state has a stake in the federal role in education. Therefore, state boards as legal entities should participate in the development of federal statutes, rules and regulations involving public education.

2. Federal legislation, rules and regulations and the distribution of federal funds must be respectful of and not conflict with state statutes and constitutions that establish education governance and accountability for the state.
3. The federal government should not mandate or promote advisory groups that duplicate or impinge upon state board functions.

C. Federal Financing of Education

1. Congressional appropriations for all federal education programs, including mandates, should be adequately funded in order to achieve the goals of these programs (1999).
2. For effective planning and efficient fiscal management, federal programs should be authorized at least one year in advance. Funds should be distributed in a timely fashion each fiscal year, and allocated in accordance with existing state and local guidelines and mechanisms.
3. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) should be funded to the full 40 percent of the national average per-pupil expenditure, as promised by Congress in 1975. (2003)
4. State compliance with federal rules and regulations should not be enforced through threat of or actual withholding of federal funding for unrelated programs.
5. Categorical grants should be considered as a funding mechanism in clearly identified areas of critical national concern.
6. Federal funds should not be used to supplant state or local financial support for education programs.
7. Federal funds should not be used, nor tax credits given, for support of non-public education at elementary and secondary levels under circumstances that would jeopardize the welfare, stability, or adequate support of the traditional system of free public education.
8. The federal government should limit reporting requirements to those necessary to account for funds, to demonstrate compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, and to assist in determining the most effective use of federal funds.
9. Special federal education funds should be given to states with federally owned lands that generate no tax revenue. Such funding, known as impact aid, is necessary to compensate for the loss of revenue to local school districts because of non-taxed federal property and activities.
10. As control over immigration is exclusively a function of the federal government, federal education funds should be provided to states with significant numbers of low-income immigrants to offset the costs of educating their children.
11. Receipt or retention of federal funds should not be conditioned on requirement or prohibitions regarding school prayer.

12. There is a national crisis regarding the physical condition of schools and the need for new construction. Therefore, it is imperative and appropriate for the federal government to allocate funds to help states and local school districts rebuild their education infrastructure and leverage additional local spending on school construction and renovation. (1997, 1998)

13. In that state boards of education are the only state policymaking authority focused solely on education, and that state boards work in close consultation with their governors and legislatures to implement the state's education agenda, therefore: The federal government should maintain the current framework of accountability and oversight of federal education funds that is provided by state boards and to maintain the funds necessary for state departments of education to perform needed duties, services, and functions. Further, any new federally funded education initiatives intended for states should be, as they have historically been, directed through the state board of education. (1999)

14. The existing distribution of federal funds for improving chronically under-performing schools has not been sufficient to enact sustainable change. It is necessary to provide both state and local education agencies with additional funds—as well as greater flexibility in their use—to support school improvement efforts and build education agency capacity to assist in this important work. (2008)

D. Nationally Mandated Assessments and Accountability

As the federal government considers implementing a national accountability system based on state assessments, NASBE asserts the following:

1. States are currently building effective assessment and accountability systems suited to their individual needs.
2. Improving achievement levels for all students is a lengthy and complex process that all states are currently engaged in. National testing should not be seen as a panacea for all problems in the education system.
3. The federal government should provide states with all necessary funding to comply with the required tests, including both development and ongoing administrative costs.
4. States—having ultimate responsibility for elementary and secondary education—must have flexibility on how to optimize learning and determine adequate progress in raising student achievement levels.
5. The implementation timeline for any nationally mandated accountability system must be sufficient to ensure quality in the assessments.
6. The use of NAEP as confirmation of state testing results should only occur provided NAEP's use for such a purpose has been validated by an independent research organization such as the National Academy of Sciences.

7. Any nationally mandated accountability system should have a built-in evaluation to determine the plan's effectiveness in each of the 50 states.
8. Funds for the state assessment component of the accountability mandate should not be taken from other areas of the education budget.
9. Any national standard for student progress should be determined by an independent group of nationally representative education policymakers, researchers, and practitioners. (2003)

10. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Research shows that health, nutrition, and safety play a critical role in student achievement; therefore, in addition to providing sequential programs of standards-based health and physical education, NASBE believes that school officials must give attention to the following areas:

A. Promotion of Student Health

All schools should:

1. Be smoke free, drug free, violence free and free of physical hazard;
2. Provide student counseling, guidance, health and psychological services at all levels;
3. Be safe and accessible for all students;
4. Promote the building of lifelong regular physical activity; and
5. Encourage that all students are adequately nourished and learn lifelong habits of healthy eating by promoting:
 - a. maximum use of quality school meal programs that are operated under the supervision of certified foodservice directors in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations;
 - b. adequate time to eat in pleasant surroundings;
 - c. that all foods and beverages sold or served during school hours are consistent with a nutritious, energy-balanced diet as recommended in the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans;
 - d. nutrition education that teaches essential knowledge, skills, and behaviors, and
 - e. staff members to model a healthy lifestyle. (1997; #5 added in 2006)

B. Comprehensive Services

State boards of education, along with other policymakers, should seek systemic changes to ensure that a comprehensive, whole-family approach is used in the delivery of health and social services. To successfully provide comprehensive services, partnerships should be forged at the state and local level among education, health, and social agencies. (1997)

C. Violence and Its Impact on Schools and Learning

1. Schools remain the safest places for children and young people. However, tragic and violent events, which reflect behaviors in society at large, do occasionally occur in schools. Therefore, schools and communities, working together, must take appropriate steps to:

- a. Build a school climate that recognizes the responsibility of all persons for a positive learning environment, and values the contribution to that environment of each student and staff member.
- b. Identify troubled children and facilitate appropriate services for them;
- c. Create a sense of belonging in schools that encompasses students, staff, and families;
- d. Create positive connections between the school and the community; and
- e. Provide for measured, appropriate responses when incidents do occur.
- f. Ensure that all school districts have policies and programs to prevent and report bullying, intimidation, and harassment.

2. State boards of education should provide leadership in assuring that children are provided with a learning environment free of the fear of violence, and teachers are provided the opportunity to use their abilities to foster learning in an atmosphere free of violence.

3. Violence in the community-at-large exacerbates the problems of violence in the schools. The portrayal of violence in the media is particularly deplorable. Members of NASBE encourage the media industry to exercise restraint and discipline in any such portrayals and support appropriate community efforts to prevent undue exposure of school children to violence through the media.

4. NASBE should continue to provide assistance to state boards of education on the implementation of effective violence prevention policies and strategies. (2000, 2003, 2009)